DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 130 347 CS 501 516

AUTHOR Plax, Pamela M.
TITLE Interpretive Performance of the Internal Narrator.
PUB DATE 76
NOTE 14p.; Study prepared at University of New Mexico

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Characterization (Literature); *Drama; *Dramatics; Guidelines; Higher Education; Interpretive Skills; *Narration; *Production Techniques
IDENTIFIERS Joyce (James); *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man

ABSTRACT

Internal narration is a "direct quotation of the mind" without authorial intervention, in which the reader overhears characters thinking silently. Dramatic interpretation and internal narration share the characteristics of primarily auditory expression and symbolic use of images. One of the most widely read and taught examples of this method, James Joyce's "Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man," is examined with regard to performance potential, and general guidelines are suggested for the production of all narratives featuring internal narration. It is suggested that dramatic interpretations should utilize a strategy (such as multiple casting) which reveals the many facets of an individual's mind, should depict the inner workings of a character's mind, should be staged apart from direct audience contact, should use techniques which enrich the dramatic "present" with references to past and future, and should illustrate the internal dynamics of the mind by altering the media of sound and image. (KS)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

ED130347

INTERPRETIVE PERFORMANCE OF THE INTERNAL NARRATOR

By

Pamela M. Plax
Department of Speech Communication
University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, New Mexico

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Pamela M. Plax

TO ERIC AND ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING UNDER AGREEMENTS WITH THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION. FURTHER REPRODUCTION OUTSIDE THE ERIC SYSTEM REQUIRES PERMISSION OF THE COPYRIGHT OWNER.

April 2, 1976

CS 501 816

INTERPRETIVE PERFORMANCE OF THE INTERNAL NARRATOR

When Lilla A. Heston examined the narrator of Robbe-Grillet's Jealousy to determine modes for performance, she concluded: "Though perpetually present in every line, the narrator is also absent.... But how is the performer, who is inevitably present, to enact a narrator who is both present and absent?"[1] The speaker in Jealousy is an Internal Narrator; his perceptions comprise the novel. The reader, positioned within the speaker's mind, "sees" through his eyes and associates thoughts with his referents. Joyce, Sartre, Proust, Kafka and others have experimented with communicating their novels through the perceptions of one character. At times, the narrator's impressions are not fully rationalized and imitate the process of thinking itself.

> Heavenly weather really. If life was always like that. Cricket weather. Sit around under sunshades. Over after over. Out. They can't play it here. Duck for six wickets. Still Captain Buller broke a window in the Kildare street club with a slog to square leg. Donnybrook fair more in their line. And the skulls we were acracking when M'Carthy took the floor. Heatwave. Won't last. Always passing, the stream of life, which in the stream of life we trace is dearer than them all. 2

The reader knows the narrator by characteristic patterns of thought rather than his appearance and relation to other personae. "One might say that the novel gives us the narrator's eyes but not the body containing them or that it gives us the...inner self but not the outer."[3] In the print medium, the reader gives the inner voice a form or conceives of it as disembodied.

In some respects, interpretive performance seems to violate the novelist's purpose in using the Internal Narrator. Heston did not prohibit the interpreter from performing Jealousy, but suggested

that enactment "works, in some ways, against the text."[4] The problem is: should an interpreter perform a work featuring Internal Narration, and, if so, how?

This paper suggests that interpretation and Internal Narration share enough theoretic similarities to make performance mutually beneficial. Both manners of expression are based primarily in auditory experience, using images symbolically. This position is developed by explaining a performance of A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man by Joyce. This novel represents one of the most accessible Internal Narratives to the reader as shown by its inclusion in many programs of literary study. Therefore, as one of the most widely read and taught examples of this genre, Portrait will be examined for performance potential.

Internal narration is a "direct quotation of the mind" without authorial intervention.[5] The reader overhears the character thinking silently to himself. Within the novel, only the character is able to hear himself. Steinburg attempted to apply Korzybski's stages of rationaliziation to label the types of thoughts recorded. Steinburg constructed a continuum with stream of consciousness, the least rationalized, at one end through interior monologue, narrated monologue, and thought soliloquy on the opposite end. Each type representing an increased rationalization and a more discernable implied author.

Various thought levels may be represented within one character, forming multiple voices. Each inner voice speaks for a facet of the narrating character. Freud described the modern authors' tendency "to split up their egos, and in this way to personify the

conflicting trends in their own mental life..."[6] The voices, denoting levels of thought, diverse viewpoints, and memories, converge in the narrator's mind, turning inward rather than outward towards the other characters.

The voices of thoughts evoke images of scenes, characters, and action. Veilleux suggests a corresponding process in interpretive performance:"The audience in the interpretation mentally re-creates the images of the literature in response to the oral cues of the interpreter."[7] The interpreter and the Internal Narrator, transform word symbols into their sensory referents.

> Silently, in a dream she had come to him after her death, her wasted body within its loose brown graveclothes giving off an odour of wax and rosewood, her breath, that had bent upon him, mute, reproachful, a faint odour of wetted ashes.[8]

Sight is not the only sense that can be evoked by words, also smell, touch, taste, as well as sound.

Internalized images are fragments rather than complete pictures. The reader is located behind Stephen's eyes in his description of the football scrimmage.

> He was caught in the whirl of the scrimmage and fearful of the flashing eyes and muddy boots, bent down to look through the legs. The fellows were struggling and groaning and their legs were rubbing and kicking and stamping. Then Jack Lawson's yellow boots dodged out the ball and all the other boots and legs ran after.[9]

These truncations of the total scene attempt to represent how as well as what Stephen perceives. Edel describes this limited subjective viewpoint as a characteristic of modern novels.

> ...plot ceases to be the author's concern, characters (in the old sense of described, acting individuals) disappear; people are <u>suggested</u>; we are given a gesture, a smile, an emanation from their minds, an emotion - but we seldom 'see' them. We are in a novel of mirror atmospheres.[10]

Internal Narration is characteristically: 1. auditory experience, 2.multiple voices reflecting inner complexity, and 3.imaging of symbols suggestive of reality.

The interpretive mode seems especially well suited to perform Internal Narration since 1. it is intrinsically an oral medium, 2. it can use multiple readers, and 3. it is also involved in the imaging process.[11]

Interpretation is primarily oral rather than visual experience.[12] The reader's voice is used to evoke the virtual experience of the literature. His face and body suggest the fullness in the text and qualify his oral expression.

Since voice is the primary vehicle of interpretation, differences in thought and character are indicated by changing voice quality, either by vocal modulation, different readers or mediums. For example, a director of Alice in Wonderland might cast two Alices, one in the "real world" and one in Wonderland. As Alice falls down the rabbit hole, a recording of her voice in an echo chamber would be heard.

The resonating quality of sound has the capacity to superimpose past on present in Internal Narration. The insertion of a sub-strata of sound cues from the past informs the present action. For example, if the narrator once fell in love by the ocean, the sounds of waves and gulls might underscore his new romantic interest in the office. The sound abbreviates the total past experience. The surrealism of individual perception might be indicated by combining mechanical and human sound production, varying pitch, loudness, and rate.

In a discussion on scene location in Readers Theatre, Kleinau and Kleinau posited that a distinct difference exists between visual

and aural space orientation.[13] Aural space is dynamic, always in flux, and, therefore, better able to deal with abstract symbolism than visual space. The interpreter finds aural space the appropriate location for the scene he is recreating in the minds of his audience. Secondly, sensory modalities are interrelated,"making it possible for the audience to hear 'visually.'"[14] When several sense channels were stimulated simultaneously, the listener was unable to determine which stimulus caused which response. The word became indistinguishable from the image it elicited. Likewise, the narrator's inner voices blend with the pictures of past and present supplied by the reader.

Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man demonstrates performance of the text of Internal Narration by manifesting the novel's 1. basic orality, 2. complexity of character voices, and 3. imagistic qualities.

Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man dramatizes an internal monologue of Stephen Dedalus, the artist. This interpretation agrees with Jung's article on Ulysses which describes the work as "a complex, multi-faceted and extended monologue of one character."[15] Stephen's actions and discoveries are underscored by spoken meditation. The adaptation may create counterpoint by adding Latin passages of the Mass to be chanted under Stephen's mental confessions of guilt. Narrative fragmentation is suggested by developing a fugal rendition of his experiences at Clongowes, repeating in a round the motifs of his being pushed in the puddle, his fears of dying, and Parnell's death. The text is ordered by association of images rather than by logical progression.[16]

Sound plays an important part in the time scheme of Portrait. Echoing sounds join past to present. Both "Joyce" and Stephen

rely more on sound than sight for experience. Their weak eyesight causes their sense of hearing to assume precedence.[17] "He drew forth a phrase from his treasure and spoke it softly to himself"(166), Portrait's prose is so aural that associations and rhythmic structures are not revealed until they are voiced.[18] Sound motifs such as cricket bats reminding Stephen of pandy bats "pick,pack,pock, puck, "the drops of water in a fountain falling softly in the brimming bowl"(59); Stephen's repeated crying out from pain, lust, relief, and recognition; the call of the gulls and the sea recur throughout the novel. At first sounds like his father's voice are imprinted on Stephen's passive mind. Later, Stephen matures, becomes master of language, creating poems which transform harsh sounds into beautiful(166-167). The interpreter's voice reflects his emotions and internal world. "Joyce's" private word associations are sometimes obscure to the silent reader. However, a trained reader, carefully attuning himself to the emotional referent for the lines, will be able to convey the poetic logic of Joycean syntax.[19] Pacing of the sounds indicates Stephen's rate of thought.

Casting poses an interesting problem since all readers are Stephen. In each chapter, one reader could narrate the events while others aid in the dramatization, interacting with him at times to emphasize the relationship between storyteller and focal character. Readers could perform several parts indicating how all personae emanate from Stephen's mind. Four or five Stephens would provide enough voices and at least one of the readers should be female. The female reader provides contrast and dramatizes the artist's anima-the feminine in man. In an artist the influence of the other sex is strong, enabling him to portray both men and women. A female and a male voice speaking

during the wading scene, for example, emphasizes the asexuality of aesthetic apprehension of beauty.

Narrative voices of young and mature Stephen have been indicated. The voice of "Joyce", so influential in the creation of Portrait, should be disembodied, carried over an off stage microphone, pervading everything but nowhere seen.

Multiple voices are used, in unison and discord, to reflect the mind's reverberations. The retreat scene featuring the "hell-fire" sermons presents opportunity for choral reading. After confession, Stephen is spiritually capable of receiving the ciborium. The readers' voices join in Gregorian chant as a sound accompaniment to Stephen's acceptance of the Host.

> Domine non sum dignus ut utres sub tectum meum;
> Sed tantum dic verbo,et sanabitur anima mea.
>
> Lord, I am not worthy that you should come under my roof,
> Speak but the word and my soul shall be healed.
>
> Roman Catholic Mass
> Latin version

This chant is recited just before Communion and expresses Stephen's feeling of unworthiness and exultation.

The reading should be enriched by carefully selected and performed background sounds, particularly during epiphanies: the sea behind the wading; the pandybat behind Stephen's interview with the rector; "hoarse riot and wrangling and the drawling of drunken singers" behind Stephen's seduction.

The basic aurality and multiple voices evoke the images inherent in Portrait. The production design suggests the internalized point of view as much as feasible. The action occurs within Stephen's mind. The attention is turned inward from the event being perceived to the manner of perception. The readers are facets of Stephen's consciousness.

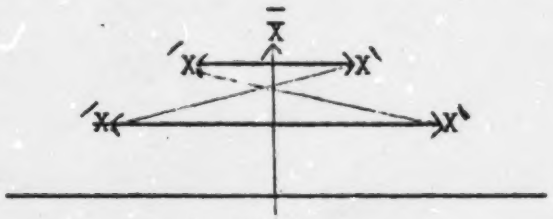
Lighting, beginning in the darkness of the womb, progresses through Stephen's various stages, symbolized by colors. Each newly lighted reader reveals a new aspect of Stephen. For example, green represents his vegetable existence; red for his realization of physicality, purple, his remorse and penitence for Church-defined sins, blue , his intellectualism born of sky and water, and a prism of all colors for his aesthetic annunciation. Selection of color derives from religious and artistic significance.

The readers' focus is off-stage, over the heads of the audience, placing the locus of action in the audience. No interaction occurs between readers and audience. When the personae interact, the scene takes place on stage. For example, when Stephen defends his rights to the REctor after an unjust pandying, the two interpreters appear to meet, allowing the audience to overhear. Focus is the primary technique employed to distance the audience. Stephen's narrative tempts the observer to identify, but "Joyce's" prose reminds him that the experience is aesthetic.

Use of manuscripts fulfills an important function not only by suggesting the production's artifice but also by symbolizing Stephen's increasing reliance on words to order reality. The coalescence of implied author, storyteller, and focal character is reflected in the text.

Staging suggests the interior of the human mind. The readers are placed in a semi-circle facing out. Center space is open to dramatize scenes. Behind each reader stands a full length mirror covered with black cloth. As each interpreter presents his stage of Stephen's maturation, his mirror is uncovered, reflecting himself, other readers, and other reflections. As Stephen develops, the reflections

become complex and segmentary; hundreds of black shapes, partial and whole, crowd the stage. Reality and reflection join inexplicably to depict Stephen's thinking. The audience comprehends the aesthetic whole of his mind rather than fragments of thought.[20]



Reflections and readers form patterns of thought association.

This staging permits audience members to view themselves in the center mirror reflections. The paradoxical quality of point of view in Portrait is domonstrated: the viewer perceives the boy's dual roles as agent and observer while the viewer himself experiences and observes. The audience member both identifies with the character and stands outside the action, in stasis.

The Readers Theatre production of Portrait of the Artist of a Young Man illustrated the feasibility of performing works featuring Internal Narration. The initial question was should an interpreter perform Internal Narration; the answer is definitely yes because both share aurality, multiple viewpoints, and imaging.

The production of Portrait is examined for general guidelines applicable to all narratives featuring Internal Narration. In Portrait, the narrator is identified as existing concurrently within the undramatized consciousnesses of Stephen and "Joyce;" therefore multiple casting reveals the various facets of the narrating mind. Internal Narration, by definition, focuses on the variations within one individual's thinking. Internal Narration should utilize a

strategy to reveal the many facets of an individual's mind.

Cutting reflects the typical progression and associations of Stephen Dedalus and balances epiphanies with anti-epiphanies in his maturation. Internal Narration represents an individual's characteristic thought processes. The script of Internal Narration should depict the inner workings of the character's mind.

Events in Portrait are located inside Stephen's mind. Staging isolates the surrealistic depiction of mind from the audience. Internal Narration always takes place within a mind as it observes external stimuli. Internal Narration should be staged apart from direct audience contact, as complete within itself.

Time in Portrait comes from character perception rather than from objective reality. Past and future sounds impinge on present action. Internal Narration depicts an individual's subjective perceptions of time through past associations. Internal Narration should use techniques which enrich the present with past and future references.

Portrait uses variation in reading to depict various voices within the mind: harmony, discord, choral, or solo. Internal Narration attempts to dramatize an individual's characteristic mental states. Therefore, Internal Narration should illustrate the complex interaction within the mind by altering mediums of sound or image.

Footnotes

[1]Lilla A. Heston, "An Exploration of the Narrator in Robbe-Grillet's Jealousy," CSSJ, XXIV, No. 3(Fall 1973), 180-181.

[2]James Joyce, Ulysses (New York: Random House, 1946), 85.

[3]Heston, 180.

[4]Heston, 181.

[5]Erwin R. Steinburg,"...The Steady Monologue of the Interiors: The Pardonable Confusion...," James Joyce Quarterly, VI, No.3(Spring 1969), 188.

[6]Sigmund Freud, "The Relation of the Poet to Daydreaming," On Creativity and the Unconscious(New York: Harper and Row, 1958), 51

[7]Jere Veilleux, "Toward a Theory of Interpretation QJS,LV, No.2 (April 1969),108.

[8] Ulysses, 7.

9James Joyce, Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man (New York: Viking Press, 1967), 9-10.

[10]Leon Edel, The Modern Psychological Novel 1900-1950 (New York: J.P. Lippincott Co.,1955),180.

[11]Veilleux says:"In fact interpretation is the only performing art that attempts primarily to evoke and to enhance the imaging capacities of its audience." 110.

[12]This salient point is affirmed by definitions of the art by such scholars as Wallace Bacon, Jere Veilleux, Martin Cobin, Joanna Maclay, Thomas Sloan, and Don Geiger, just to mention a few.

[13]Marion and Marvin Kleinau, "Scene Location in Readers Theatre: Static or Dynamic," ST, XIV, No. 3(Sept. 1965), 195-196.

[14]Kleinau and Klainau, 196.

[15]Franz Stanzel,Narrative Situations in the Novel, trans. James P. Pusack (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana Univ. Press, 1971),142.

Footnotes

[16]A performance script of Portrait would include the following scenes:

Book I - Scene 1

set tone	Collage of impressions from birth to Clongowes
	The writing lesson - humiliation by Father Dolan
epiphany	The Rector's retribution

Book II - Scene 2

anti-epiphany	Dinner with the Dedalus family
	Stephen's physical need
epiphany	Introduction to sexual love

Book III - Scene 3

anti-epiphany	Stephen's "cold lucid indifference"
	The Retreat Sermon (cut)
	Stephen's Nightmare
epiphany	Spiritual Love, confession, and communion

Book IV - Scene 4

anti-epiphany	Tedium of piety
	Stephen's walk to the sea
epiphany	Aesthetic Vision of girl wading

Book V - Scene 5

anti-epiphany	Trivial sensations at breakfast
	Stephen's credo of Art
epiphany	Stephen's poem representing his vocation
ending	Stephen's journal

This cutting and arrangement uses point of view as its rationale.

[17]Raymond Tarbox, "Auditory Experience in Joyce's Portrait, American Imago XXVII. No. 4(Winter 1970), 328.

[18]Stanzel, 122.

[19]Tarbox, 330.

[20]Jacques Maritain, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry, Bollingen Series XXXVI (New York: Pantheon Books, 1953), 260.